

REMARKS

Responsive to the Office Action mailed 31 May 2006, applicant has amended the application to place it in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the claims of the application is therefore requested.

CLAIM OBJECTIONS:

The objection to claims 1, 4, and 6 has been addressed by suitable amendment to the language of the claims. The objection to claim 5 has been obviated in view of the cancellation of claim 5. In view of the noted amendments and the cancellation of claim 5, applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the indicated claim objections.

CLAIM REJECTIONS UNDER 35 USC 112:

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being allegedly indefinite. Applicant has addressed the rejections of claim 1 based on a lack of antecedent basis by suitably amending the language of claim 1 to provide adequate antecedent basis. The rejection of claim 1 in view of the language on line 7 has been addressed by deleting the identified language. The basis of the rejection of claim 4 has been obviated by a reformulation of the language identified by the Examiner. In view the amendments to claims 1 and 4, applicant respectfully submits that the rejections of claims 1-7 have been overcome. Withdrawal of the rejections is therefore requested.

CLAIM REJECTION UNDER 35 USC 102:

Claims 1-3, 6 and 7 stand allegedly rejected under 35 USC 102 over Colston. Claims 4 and 5 have not been rejected under 35 USC 102 or 103. Responsive to the instant Office Action applicant has amended claim 1 to include the limitation that the main vessel (2) is connected to at least one support vessel (3) by an umbilical line (5). Applicant respectfully submits that Colston

neither discloses nor suggests the interconnection of a main vessel with a support vessel by means of an umbilical line. In contrast, Colston discloses the connection of the submerged chamber (5) with the diver (4) by means of umbilical lines (6) and (7). Each of these air supplying umbilical lines are directly interconnected to the interior of the submerged chamber (5) and acquire their source of air from the tanks (25) secured to the exterior of the chamber (5). See col. 3, lines 23-26. In contrast, the instant claims provide for an umbilical line which originates from the main vessel and is also used to interconnect the main vessel with the support vessel (3). Claim 6 is distinguishable from the apparatus disclosed in the Colston reference in that Claim 6 requires that the umbilical which interconnects the main vessel with the support vessel possess positive buoyancy. Colston does not appear to disclose an umbilical line which connects the main vessel (1) with the chamber (5) which has positive buoyancy.

Claim 6 is distinguishable from the apparatus disclosed in the Colston reference in that Claim 6 requires that the umbilical which interconnects the main vessel with the support vessel possess positive buoyancy. Colston does not appear to disclose an umbilical line which connects the main vessel (1) with the chamber (5) which has positive buoyancy.

New Claim 8 is distinguishable from the apparatus of the Colston disclosure in that it provides that the at least one support vessel operates from the surface of the water (sea). Colston discloses a structure in which the chamber (5) operates as a submerged vessel, instead of a surface vessel.

In view of these considerations, applicant respectfully submits that claims 1-3 and 6-8 presently distinguish over the Colston reference under the provisions of 35 USC 102. Withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 102 is therefore respectfully requested.

As a matter of clarity Claim 4 has been rewritten in independent form thereby incorporating therein the limitations of its base claim (claim 1).

CONCLUSION:



As noted above, applicant has amended the instant application in order to place the claims in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the claims of the application is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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